Marine Safety Office (MSO) Portland
Y2K Business Continuity Contingency Plan Exercise
Conducted 9 September 1999

Executive Summary

United States Coast Guard (USCG) Marine Safety Office (MSO) Portland conducted a Y2K exercise on 9 September for a period of 72 hours. The unit implemented key aspects of its Business Continuity and Contingency Plan (BCCP) and Port Safety Plan (PSP) during the Y2K critical date. This involved staffing additional positions at the unit, practicing staff recall, testing communications capability, conducting area reconnaissance, and implementing a "mini Vessel Traffic Management System (VTS)" which tracked vessels movement using manual procedures. The unit's Crisis Action Center (CAC) was fully activated for USCG personnel, as well as representatives from industry and the states of Oregon and Washington.

Since the exercise, MSO Portland has made improvements to the BCCP and PSP. The training opportunity provided by the exercise and the lessons learned will help ensure that MSO Portland is ready to conduct emergency response while continuing normal operations throughout the Y2K roll over period.

Background

MSO Portland has developed a BCCP to identify specific contingency plans and procedures that can be implemented in the event of Y2K related failures and other emergencies. The plan contains strategies to mitigate risks and documents procedures and assignments to enable emergency response while continuing normal operations. The plan addresses the adverse impacts that would be experienced in the event of losses in electrical, power, water, sewage services, and communication capabilities. The BCCP was developed to apply to single or multiple outages such as these in possible combination with events such as earthquakes, fires, flooding, or winter storm.

The PSP was developed in accordance with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Circular 2121; Federal Register Volume 64, Number 120; and the Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) 7-99. The plan will allow the unit to monitor and ensure the safety and operability of the Captain of the Port (COTP) Area of Responsibility (AOR). It focuses primarily on commercial vessels, either foreign or domestic, and allows the unit to monitor their safety throughout critical Y2K periods. The plan includes the use of the Y2K Risk Assessment Matrix to assess a vessel's potential for Y2K related failures of systems and equipment. The matrix, combined with weather, tide, and other on-scene data, will be used to determine whether the vessel can enter or depart port and under what controls, if any. The matrix will be used throughout the Y2K roll over period.

Step 1 – Establish Major Objectives

The major objective for the exercise was to test the MSO Portland BCCP and PSP.

Step 2 – Identify Exercise Participants

Participants are listed in the table below.

Participant Type	Participant
United States Coast Guard	
	Marine Safety Office, Portland
	Group, Portland

Table 1 – Portland Exercise Participants

Step 3 – Develop Exercise Scenario(s)

The MSO Portland conducted a functional exercise that consisted of the following scenarios:

- ***Watch Organization Establishment*** – The exercise involved the establishment of the Incident Command Structure (ICS). This organizational structure will be used to respond to any Y2K induced events. This is a flexible system whereby the appropriate level of response is provided for any given incident.

- ***Unit Recall*** – The exercise implemented unit recall procedures to ensure that all personnel could be recalled to active duty in the event that a communications failure or other normal means of recall fail.

- ***Back-up Communications*** – Communications is the single most important aspect of fulfilling the statutory mission for MSO Portland. The exercise involved implementing procedures contained in the Communications Plan. These procedures would be necessary in the event of power failure, phone line outage, or microchip problems during critical Y2K dates.

- ***Area Reconnaissance*** – Harbor patrols will be implemented throughout the AOR to provide "first light reconnaissance" information to the CAC. This information will enable the MSO and Group Portland to monitor potential or actual threats from Y2K related failures.

- ***Mini VTS*** – The exercise involved the implementation of a mini-VTS. This concept uses manual procedures to conduct vessel traffic management.

Step 4 – Conduct Exercise Activities

This section presents the primary MSO Portland exercise activities.

- ***Watch Organization Establishment***
  - Watchstanders reported to the CAC and began monitoring critical systems, identifying problems within the COTP AOR, and implementing back-up procedures as necessary.

  - The Y2K Assessment Matrix was used to continue vessel and facility screening and to determine appropriate controls on vessel movements.

No.	Observation/Explanation	Lesson Learned	Recommended Action
2	A more detailed listing of tugs and their capabilities is needed.	Collecting this additional information will improve USCG preparedness for Y2K.	Implement changes in the appropriate contingency plan.

Table 2 – Portland Exercise Results

For More Information

Contact the USCG Representatives

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